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Chapter I. Origin, Distribution, and Population

101 162 Owing to the scarcity of historical records concerning the Miao of Hainan Island, while people have been aware that there are Li on Hainan Island, they knew nothing about the Miao there. The scarcity of historical records was due to the fact that the Miao are not natives 167 of Hainan. All the Miao now living on Hainan migrated from out- 101 side areas in recent times. What were these areas from which they migrated? There is a statement in Volume 20 of Ch'iung-chou Fu [113] Chih /Annals of Ch'iung-chow Prefecture/ published in the Tao-kuang period /1821-1850/:

"There are also the Miao-Li people of Tan-chou about 90 or 101 more families living in ten villages; including men and women they [161] number less than one thousand. They live in the vicinity of Feng-hsü t'ung* and are also subject to the administration of the Li Tsung

[104]

/* T'ung is the term used for a district inhabited by aboriginal tribes. — Ed./

[181] /the Li magistrate/ of the said Feng-hsü t'ung. By nature they are very submissive. Occasionally, they trade in the T'iao-nan market; 101 they have never caused any trouble. Previously in the Ming period 175 /1388-1644/ when the Li uprisings were suppressed in Lo-huo t'ung and when the walled city of Lo-an was being built, Miao troops of Kwangsi province were sent there as a garrison. They were then called nu-shou /"crossbowmen"/. Later they moved to Tan-chou, and the present Miao living there are their descendants."

They are also mentioned in Volume 13 of Kan-en Hsien Chih /Annals of Kan-en District/ published in the Republican period:

[181] "Within the area of Kan-en district, there are also several hundred families of the Miao-Li, who, in recent times, have increased prolifically and dispersed to various places. They are by nature very submissive and have never caused any trouble. Previously during the Ming period, when the two rebellious t'ungs—Lo-huo and Pao-yu—

/73 cont'd/
533 And a home without a cow is lost.
539 Tenth admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
831 You should not stay idle when you see others learn to write,
/74/ Someday should you get involved in a lawsuit,
You'll know the difficulty of getting someone to write for you on a blank sheet of paper.
Eleventh admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
[18] Don't curse and utter foul words to your parents.
You are indebted to your parents for raising you.
Otherwise, your life will be lost on T'ai-shan mountain and will never return.
Twelfth admonition to you, my precious flower, in this world,
When the immortals come to fetch you to the king of the wheel,
You will be referred to the renowned king to receive judgment;
He may decided that you are to be reborn in your youth.

The following songs are frequently sung during such occasions as when a man and woman meet in a rendezvous, or when they bid each other farewell, feeling lost and sorrowful on seeing the loved one depart.

539 I. Seeing off my flower,
831 As the dark clouds see off the moon across the heart of the sky—
The dark clouds are escorting the moon, and in a little while will escort you,
Back to your melancholy land and melancholy home.
Farewell!

II. First farewell to my precious flower who will soon be returning home,
Like the clouds I see leaving the sky.
Looking at the clouds leaving the sky, how sad my humble heart is!
I am hiding my sadness at parting from my love.
Second farewell to my precious flower, from the dragon's noble land,

/119 cont'd/

648 to take them out of there; that was all they wanted. This was their sincere plea!

181 185 The Miao are very anxious for land ownership. A Miao leader complained to me vigorously: "Since we are the same people being governed by the same government, why don't we have a chance to own land?" Another one comforted himself by saying: "We don't have land only because the feng-shui in our locality is very poor; so we would have to invite a famous feng-shui expert to adjust it. Then we would be better off naturally." From these conversations we could imagine how anxiously the Miao are dreaming of land ownership. Yet they are not merely "desiring" land or waiting for what fate may decide. They know that land can be bought only 181 with money. If they want land they have to work hard so that they 556 may save some money for the purchase of land. It is indeed true 648 that a great deal of land has been gradually transferred from Li land- 423 lords to the Miao. I personally saw many such land transfer /120/ contracts in Miao homes. This shows how hard the Miao are struggling for a living. Furthermore, such hard circumstances also make the Miao more solidly unified. This fact has surprised many outside observers who have visited the Miao area. Moreover, due to their firm awareness of the struggle for a livelihood, they also possess an anxious desire for learning. They like to read and show their interest 181 in accepting Chinese civilization. When we had just arrived in the 171 Miao area, several young men began to beg us to take them out of there and send them to school. This situation was completely different from that of the Li, who consider that school is prison. One of the Miao leaders complained to us very angrily that two years before the "Li-appeasing official" Ch'en Han-kuang had selected two to three hundred young Li men and sent them to the Yen-t'ang Military Academy at Canton, but that no Miao youths had been selected.

181 Undergoing great hardship, the Miao have established schools 871 in their villages and have paid large salaries to employ Chinese 648 teachers. This usually meets with the opposition of the few Li leaders, who are jealous about it. I heard that the year before a Miao

/120 cont'd/
181 leader was arrested and tortured by the li because he planned to es-
871 tablish a school. But they were not discouraged by these unhappy
648 occurrences and pushed on to their goal. On this occasion, when we arrived in the village this spring, they were just trying to establish a school and begged us to stay there for a few months to do some teaching for them. At the least, they hoped we would help them to establish the school. But owing to our busy schedule, we had to leave within a few days. It was really surprising that when we returned there within a week we found that they had already completed the construction of the school building. Teachers had also been engaged, waiting for the opening of classes. However, the Li leaders in the neighborhood were preventing them from doing this by every means. When we left there this conflict had not been yet settled. This event impressed us deeply.

648 The Miao all live high in the mountains. Their life is hard,
123 and they have no place to submit their complaints. Therefore, they are very glad to have some cultural and social intercourse with the Chinese, and, needless to say, they have great expectations of the government. When we arrived in the Miao area, they gave us a warm welcome, /121/ because, with the exception of a few Chinese merchants, very few Chinese ever visited there and were sympathetic toward them. However, a few shrewd Li leaders also are aware of this and try by every means to prevent the Chinese from meeting the Miao. The Li leaders especially try to prevent the Miao from getting in touch with the Chinese government, so that their complaints will not be heard by the outside world and they will have to endure all the injustices inflicted on them.

511 The differences in the way of life between these two groups of people have created two entirely different national characteristics. The Miao are a people without property. The mountain area in which they live is rented from others. They have to pay a certain amount of rent annually. These mountain lands usually have very poor soil. Water supply is insufficient. They have to work hard to combat
157 nature in order to obtain a minimum amount of produce to live on.
461 Such circumstances have made them a hard-working and very frugal

/122 cont'd/

H 181 273 276 [48] and smoking are very popular habits among the Li. Parents do not even forbid their children to indulge in them. Taking advantage of this Li habit, the Chinese merchants make money by encouraging them to go on sprees. Consequently, many Li become bankrupt. (For further reference, see Chapter V of Report on an Investigation of the Li of Hainan Island.) Since they need not worry about making a living, the Li are lazy as compared with the Miao. The Miao want more land to cultivate but do not have mountain slopes that they can plant. The Li, on the contrary, do not want to work while they have lots of land. This is a sharp contrast between the two peoples. In personality the Li are masterful, savage and cruel, and hot-tempered. On the one hand, this might be due to the influence of smoking and drinking; on the other hand, there is also the historical factor. In the past 2,000 years, Li uprisings were very frequent. The governments of successive dynasties constantly tried to reduce them to submission by force. However, they have never really been subdued. No dynasty has ever really had them under complete control. Hence they still retain the fighting nature of a primitive people. However, some aspects of their nature are also praiseworthy. They are very frank and straightforward. These characteristics show up especially clearly when they are compared with the Miao.

H M 171 157 181

(3)

H M 648 439 The preceding has been a discussion of the conflicts in the relationships of the three peoples. Now let us discuss the harmonious aspects.

Relations between ethnic groups are based upon mutual demands. Therefore days of peace are more frequent than days of dissension, and harmonious relations are more evident than those of conflict. The harmonious relations between the Chinese, Li, and Miao are very evident and easily seen and are based upon their economic transactions. In these harmonious relations, an important role is played by the Chinese merchants. They have created an unbreakable

/130 cont'd/

Second month, twenty-first day. (Sunday)

124 At eleven o'clock in the morning we left for Wen-hua market. We had previously asked Mr. Li Hsi-ch'ing to get some of the Miao and Li of the vicinity to come here to meet us. Soon we saw the Miao headman /chia ch'ang/ of Pao-ch'a village, Wang Fu-shou arriving with a group of over 20 Miao men and women. But only a
126 few Li people came. Mr. Yang Ch'eng-chih immediately began the task of taking physical measurements of the people there, photographing them, etc. The Miao struck me as a group of very likable people. We invited them to a feast at Mr. Li's store and presented them with some small gifts. Mr. Li's wife, a Li, was visibly displeased upon
648 seeing our bestowal of favor on the Miao. I was really puzzled by this, but later upon study I began to understand the complex relationship between these two groups, which can only be grasped by someone who has actually lived among them.

●181 As we were returning from Wen-hua, three or four Miao men followed us closely. They complained to us about the harships of their lives and earnestly begged us to take them along for schooling. Their desire for knowledge and education was so sincere and pressing that it amazed me greatly. This indicated the deep-hearted cry of the minority groups to which we sincerely hope the government will give special attention.

Second month, twenty-second day. (Monday)

487 Ten o'clock in the morning, we started off for a visit to the Miao
361 village of Pao-ch'a under the guidance of the Miao headman, Wang Fu-shou. The Miao live in the high mountains, /131/ and the path to the village was unusually winding and rugged. On the way we learned from Headman Wang that Headman Lu of Ang-chi village had a large collection of written records of the Miao. We were much excited and decided to head directly for that village first. Upon our
123 arrival the villagers appeared very much disturbed, being taken aback by the unexpected presence of strangers. I hurried immediately to find Headman Lu and explained to him the reason for our abrupt arrival. This allayed their suspicion.

2:Ling & Ruey-310 E-5 (1933) 1947 AE5 Miao AE5

CHAPTER NINE

THE DRUM DANCE AND AMUSEMENTS

(I) The Drum Dance

*535 [181] Although the culture of the Miao in western Hunan is comparatively backward, some of the primitive traits that are preserved today are not entirely without merit. For example, [526] the drum dance and boxing both are worth preserving, especially the drum dance which attracts most attention. Recording the drum dance of the Miao, Miao Fang-pei Lan, "Feng-shu [534] Kao," states: "They cut a tall tree, hollow out the inside, and seal the two ends with animal skins to make a drum. Pretty women are asked to dance and beat on it. They select good men and women singers, who are clad in theatrical clothes in [292] all colors, or wrapped in red blankets, with kerchiefs on the heads and two strips of colored paper trailing behind the back. Men to the left and women to the right, they spin and sing, responding to each other, now raising their arms, now stamping their feet slowly or rapidly in unison to the rhythm of the music. This is called the drum dance." This account is a [782] description of the drum dance during the great Miao sacrificial ceremony of eating ox. In recent times the local governments [656] have repeatedly prohibited licentious rites among the Miao, and so dances such as the drum dance are now rarely held. [186] Those Miao with some education, the so-called enlightened Miao, feel ashamed when talking about their drum dance, because they consider it as exposing their barbaric traits. Some decades from now this kind of drum dance, which so clearly demonstrates their own tribal nature, may become extinct. Following are described in detail the results of our investigations.

[184] The drum dance of the Miao in Hunan is called "monkey drumming." The Hung Miao /Red Miao/ in the vicinity of Tung-jen in Kweichow also have a kind of drum dance called

576 one another's left shoulder and asking "*Dieh zao nioh gioh?*"—"Are you well?" An adult greets children by rubbing or patting his or her head. The form of farewell is (the host) "Go slowly, go slowly" (the parting guest) "Sit slowly, sit slowly". 574 181 They are wonderfully hospitable and guests are expected to eat to satisfy. How often the traveller sees them stuff away basin after basin of maize until he fears there will be a terrible accident! People will go short themselves so that visitors be generously treated. Should a guest be of some importance a goat or sheep is slain and cooked—it is not always meticulously clean—and upon the departure of the guest a leg of the animal is always given to him. A non-observance of this custom would be a serious breach of good manners, as also it would be to refuse food to even a casual visitor. Hospitality is as characteristic of them as of the Arab, and a Miao will borrow food to entertain a guest. Though poor, thriftless and no lovers of fighting, they are simple and generous, honest and lovable. One of the child races of the world, they are as old as the Chinese, and when Moses led the children of Israel through the wilderness, the Miao were hunting wild beasts on their beloved hills and at the close of day their bards would sing a Miao version of the Creation, the Flood, and the Re-population of the World; and story-tellers would narrate quaint legends which have been handed down to this generation. Here is one. Would not Kipling have enjoyed it?

773 539 Long, long ago, instead of there being only one

an enlightened person among the Miao. His religious fervor, however, was a little too excessive, and it disqualified him as a true leader of his people. He preached among them for more than twenty years with great success, but since he and his foreign associates had left the church, no one succeeded them as a full time preacher. The church school has been closed down. There are only two American doctors in the hospital, having charge at the same time of the church, but they have no time for preaching. So the faith of the Miao and I in Protestant Christianity is also on the decline.

Besides the Catholic Church and the China Inland Mission, the Seventh Day Adventists have recently established a church in An-shun to spread the Christian principles but rather on a small scale. At present the work is carried on by a young man of the Hua Miao tribe, named Tang Chen-ying, with about thirty members equally divided among the Chinese and Miao-I, and a church school of over ten Miao children.

The Miao and I in An-shun are largely uneducated and superstitious, believing strongly in ghosts and evil spirits. All their daily and farm activities, trading, sickness, marriage and funeral events are subject to the influences of the spirits.

The following are some examples:

(1) Spiritual Media. The names for spiritual media in An-shun are the same in the Miao-I language as in the Chinese. The men are known as Kwei-shih or Tuan-kung; the women, Mi-la or Mi-pu. Their duty is to sacrifice to the spirits to invoke their aid and to provide a medium between the spiritual and the human worlds. As such they are respected by the people. All ancestor worship and funeral events have to be presided over by the Kwei-shih. Every

& Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

581 181 There is a strong sentiment against marrying daughters into families that live far away or in desolate places on high mountains. The common belief that the Miao love to live on the high and rugged mountains and are unwilling to live on the rich and level plains is as great a mistake as historians ever made. The Miao live on the high and rugged mountains because they are a defeated people and have been forced to do so. The Ch'uan Miao name for heaven is "Ntsə ni l ʌ u Gʌ u bi" or "the ancient level country of God." It is a land where there are no more steep mountains to climb.

585 Before the bride leaves her home, a meal is provided by her parents for her and for those who escort her. In the wedding procession there are generally one or more old women, relatives of the bride, a male relative or friend who manages the procession, the brothers of the bride and other friends who choose to go along. If it is a long distance to the groom's home, a meal is provided to be eaten by the way. In the bridal procession are generally carried such clothing, boxes, chests of drawers or other objects that have been given as bridal presents by her parents to the bride. The manager carries with him a bamboo tree with roots which symbolizes the large number of descendants of the couple. It is also supposed to have magic power to help the family thus to prosper. Sometimes a branch of a tea tree is also carried. Some plant the bamboo tree and others hang it up on the wall of the house. The *liu shêng* is not used at weddings for its notes are thought to be too sad for such occasions.

On arriving at the home of the groom, the brothers of the bride generally escort her into the house as a protection from demons. If she has no brothers, first cousins will do and lacking these, other male relatives may be invited to act as brothers. When entering the house the bride covers her face with a black and a white cloth. Her older brother goes in front and she holds onto his belt. Behind her an older or younger brother holds an umbrella over her as protection from demons.

Sometimes the bride and her companions enter the home and walk around in a circle three times. At other times, the Chinese custom of kowtowing three times to parents, relatives, and friends is followed. Tea is soon offered to the guests. According to an old custom that is no longer observed, the meat of a particular kind of bird and fish were provided at wedding feasts. There is always a wedding feast for the relatives and friends. One of the male relatives later counts before all the clothing, chests of drawers, and other things that have been sent along by the bride's parents. When her relatives and friends finally depart, the groom and his relatives go through a form of detaining her by force. This shows that

[4 cont.]
101 shall not enumerate them separately. According to my classi-
184 fication the I in Kweichow may be divided into Chung-chia, Sui-chia, Tung-chia and Chuang-chia; the Miao may be divided into Hê Miao, Hua Miao, Ch'ing Miao, Pê Miao and Hung Miao. The Hê Miao and Hu Miao are more numerous and occupy a large territory. The Hê Miao live in the various hsien districts in the southeast, and the Hua Miao in the northwestern districts. The Hung Miao, Ch'ing Miao and Pê Miao are fewer in number and live in some narrow strips of land. The Hung Miao are limited to T'ung-jen and Sung-t'ao in the northeast; the Ch'ing Miao, to Kweiyang, Ting-fan, Ch'ing-chen and An-shun in the middle of the province; and the Pê Miao, to Kweiyang, Kwei-ting and Lung-li also in the middle. The Chung-chia and the Tung-chia among the I are the most numerous and occupy wider areas, being chiefly in the middle and the south. The Tung-chia are mostly in the southeast corner, and the Sui-chia in Li-po, Tu-shan, San-ho, Tu-chiang, and Hsia-chiang in the south. A small number of Tung-chia [Chuang-chia?] emigrated several decades ago from I-pei, Lo-ch'eng and San-chiang in Kwangsi and settled along the commercial highways in the border regions.

3) Characteristics. Physically, the Miao-I are a very
181 sturdy and healthy people. They work hard all year round
[147] from sunrise to sunset, barefooted, wearing little in wind and rain, and living with Nature itself. Being a simple-minded people, they have few vices. Before opium was banned in
[276] Kweichow, only a few Miao-I were addicted to this drug with the result that they are healthier than the Chinese in every respect. They can endure hardship and are perseverant and patient. Their outstanding character is honesty and straightforwardness: anyone who can earn their trust will find them faithful and true to the last without ever faltering. If you ask them to leap into the flame they would do so without hesitation. But their knowledge being limited, they have little judgment, are stubborn and tardy, and lack the will to progress. They do everything according to what is handed down from their ancestors, [5] and it is often difficult to explain things to them.

[5 cont.]

181 609 However, due to repeated instances of swindling and oppression by the Chinese, they are always on their guard and suspicious of every good motive. This discord among the racial groups is entirely the fault of the Chinese, and efforts must be made to eliminate it. Whenever I arrived at a Miao-I village I often found at first wariness and restraint on their part. I understood the cause of such psychology and persisted in dealing with them in good faith. After we came to know each other better, their fear soon gave way to warmth and friendliness, which still lingered on at the time of parting. The Miao-I district I have seen is actually a garden of harmony and happiness. It is hoped that those sympathetic to the Miao-I would continue to visit their areas to influence and help them so as to raise their standard of living to the level of the other people in China.

3. Livelihood

1) Food. The staple food of the Miao and I consists of 262 rice, corn, buckwheat, potato and huang-li [coarse rice?], varying according to localities. The mountain terrain in the northwest produces corn, buckwheat, potato and huang-li, and so so the principal food of the Miao-I people there is corn, which is eaten all year round, white potato, buckwheat and the rest are eaten only occasionally. In the southeast there are more [243] irrigated fields in which rice is produced. The very poor people would eat corn, buckwheat and potato, while the others have both ordinary rice and glutinous rice for food, especially the latter, which is known colloquially as "the Miao glutinous rice." [482] Often one sees a Miao or I traveling with a bamboo basket tied to the waist; this basket contains glutinous rice used as refreshment during recess from work. Usually the Miao-I eat 264 two meals a day, with an extra noon meal during the busy agricultural season. When eating at home, they place the food on a table and sit on stools around it; but sometimes they also eat outdoors, squatting or standing under the eaves. In the kind of food they have and their manner of eating, they are 262 the same as the Chinese. One difference is their fondness of

69: Lewis T-5 (1950) 1951 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8
Miao AE5

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language or religion, cannot follow the subtlety of Western religious concepts. They have a passion for taking things *au pied de la lettre*. Being told that the basic commandment of Christianity as well as Buddhism is 'thou shalt not kill', they cannot swallow such reservations as capital punishment and 'the just war'; while casuistry repels them. Moreover, a bonze, the spiritual leader of the country people among whom he lives and works, occupies by virtue of his rigorous fulfilment of the principles of his religion, a position in their esteem accorded in the West, say, to a boxing champion. The Laotians have come to associate the prestige of sanctity with certain abstinences and uncomfortable practices. The bonze gives an example of utter renunciation which is awe-inspiring by comparison with the minor self-abnegations of the villagers. The Laotians, therefore, although tolerant in the extreme, are not impressed by the worth of a would-be spiritual leader who presents himself to them loaded with material possessions. And this negative attitude deepens into a certain aversion if, as usually happens, the holy men of the West spend most of their time hunting in a country where animals must be allowed to die of old age. I fear that where the austere Dominicans, and the Jesuits failed, there is little hope for the Evangelists.

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However, the missionary was far from despondent. There were Meos in the mountains not far from Vientiane, and just as in the plateaux of Viet-Nam the Moïs had not rejected the Gospel, so here the primitive peoples of the mountains seemed promising material for evangelization. There would be no risk of jeopardizing conversion by hunting, among such hearty amateurs of open-air sports as the Meos, and if the missionary had more of this world's goods than they – well, that was a sure sign that his *ai* (or spirit), was stronger, and it would be a good thing to imitate him. Before the Meos could trouble themselves with renunciatory religions they would have to create a comfortable and abundant civilization for themselves. There was no chance of becoming sated with prosperity at the top of their mountains.

69: Lewis T-5 (1950) 1951 AM 1 Indochina
Miao AE5
Sham-Thai AL3

INTO THE MEO COUNTRY

Besides the Meos' predilection for mountain tops they have other claims to distinction. They are utterly independent and quite fearless. Their passion for freedom compels them to live in the smallest of villages and, apart from such rare events as the invasion of 1860, they will not tolerate chiefs or leaders. If forcibly brought to lower altitudes they are soon taken ill and die. They are normally pacific, but if compelled to fight are apt to eat the livers of slain enemies. M 181

The Meos are the only people in Indo-China who are not in the slightest concerned with evil spirits, although they admit their existence. Their complete indifference to all the ghouls and devils that plague the races surrounding them has invested them with enormous prestige, which they are careful to cultivate. They like to encourage the belief, prevalent among the Thais, that they are were-wolves and can turn into tigers at wish. They have no funerary cults but celebrate a funeral – or any other event providing the slightest excuse – with orgies of drinking. Husbands and wives keep their own property. Children are given the greatest degree of freedom; and sexual promiscuity before marriage – even with strangers – is general. 'Sacred groves' exist – there is a celebrated one at Dong-Van in Tonkin – to which Meo girls resort, and offer themselves freely to all comers. It is said that large-scale maps, upon which the locations of such groves have been scrupulously plotted, are the prized possessions of most French garrisons in Tonkin. Besides breeding fine, white dogs, they are experts at taming monkeys and birds, particularly a kind of minah which they teach a wide repertoire of imitative sounds. The Meos will only part with their animals for an enormous price – payable in solid silver which they immediately convert into massive jewellery. M 771 M 836 M 231 435

But the first village beyond Muong Kassy, perched on a bare hill-top and reached laboriously up a long winding path, proved not to belong to Meos but the 'black' Thais – so called from the distinctive dress of their women. It was like climbing up to an eagle's eyrie and finding crows in possession. A rare species of crow though. Check- ST 361

69: Lewis T-5 (1950) 1951 AM 1 Indochina
Miao AE 5

249 But this family‡ was in its workaday clothes, as its head was very anxious to explain to Dupont. They had been away a week, working in their opium-poppy fields, and now they were on their way home for a flying visit. Dupont asked about a dog, and the head of the family invited us to come up and see for ourselves, as he had no idea who was home and who wasn't.

311 It was a long, slow climb up to the village, although the Meos, as 361 they skipped along by our side, seemed in no way to notice the slope, nor their huge burdens. The coarse grass — usual legacy of Meo occupation — was replaced here by a noxious thorny scrub. For miles, in all directions from the village, nothing would grow but this ultimate of austere vegetations. This village was at the last stage before it would have to be moved. The fields under cultivation were now so far away that the villagers lived dispersed in temporary shelters where they worked. Very soon they would be too far from the village to return at all and it would be moved, ten or fifteen miles, always south; leaving behind the prairie grass and scrub. It only wanted the Mans to arrive here from Tonkin — the Mans cultivate on Meo lines between 1000 and 3000 feet — to reproduce eventually in Laos the denuded wilderness of southern China.

342 The Meo village consisted of nothing but a few most decrepit 181 hovels. They were the lowest and the most barbarous examples of human dwellings that it would be possible to find. Why should the Meos be the most elegantly dressed and the worst housed people in the country? They are superb at the few handicrafts they undertake, but they just can't be bothered about how they are sheltered or how they sleep. There is no compulsion; no household genie — like those of the Mois — demanding high standards of order and cleanliness in the house; no canons of taste and refinement spreading slowly downwards from an idly exquisite aristocracy, since all Meos are kept hard at work; no spirit of bourgeois emulation, since this is total democracy, with no betters to imitate. The Meos have only themselves to please, and the result is anarchy.

In the hovel we were taken to, the contents of a thousand school-

‡ [i.e., a Meo family. -- Analyst]

69: Lewis T-5 (1950) 1951 AM1 Indochina
Miao AE5
Laotians AM8

boy's pockets lay strewn about; the lengths of string, the broken penknives, the buttons, the mirror glass, the tins, the bottles and the burned out lamp bulbs. Here was accumulated the jackdaw harvesting, the valuable glittering rubbish which was all a Meo wanted of civilization, and which he was free to take, while leaving the civilization itself severely alone. What foolish, generous people, these town-dwellers were!

Our host's wife, a child of fifteen, was lying with her baby on a heap of rags in the corner. The baby was sick, he said, but the only thing necessary was to keep it away from the light – and air – as much as possible. Most Meo babies die in their first two years, and one wonders what would have happened by now to the fertile land of Indo-China, if they didn't.

There was a gun in the corner – a muzzle-loader of the kind it takes a Meo two years to make. They are copied from the guns first supplied by the Jesuits to the Chinese, but are turned out by an endlessly laborious process involving boring out a solid bar by twirling a white hot iron in it. It was enormously long, like an old-fashioned Arab stove-pipe gun, and when Dupont took notice of it the Meo offered to show it to him in use. We went outside and he loaded it with powder and shot he made himself. This process took about five minutes. Before pressing the trigger he warned us to stand well away because of the muzzle blast. The target was a small banana-leaf, skewered against a bank at twenty paces. There was a tremendous bang when he fired, but the leaf remained intact. He blamed this on the maize-spirit which we had just drunk, and was quite delighted when Dupont, giving a demonstration with his American light carbine, also missed.

There were no dogs at all at this village. They were all down at the poppy fields with their owners, the Meo said.

Luang Prabang lies at the end of a long, curling descent from the mountains and through smoking bamboo groves, on the banks of the Mékong. It is built into a tongue of land formed by the con-

252 face, crowned with the halo of their wide turban, and a throat panting
243 with the effort just accomplished, together with their ballerina skirts
462 flapping about their bare legs-- the general effect of all this at the foot o
a rocky cliff makes a picture to tempt the brush of a Millet.

Section 7

Way of Life--Intellectual State--
Religious Ideas--Custom Relating to Birth, Marriage,
and Death--Religious Ideas

● 181 The Meo likes his independence very much. However, he is
177 less uncouth than the Man in his dealings with the French. It is not
609 impossible to make a soldier of him and the creation of the small posts,
701 linh co, of this race have been entirely successful. In 1904 about forty of them were incorporated into the "Tonkinese Tirailleurs" at Bao Lac, but this attempt gave less satisfactory results because of their antipathy to life in the barracks. In the future we should be satisfied with having them enter the police forces of the frontier.

871 The Meo, while somewhat crude, are not entirely without
153 intelligence. A school was founded in March 1903 at the military post of Phobang, made up of young Meo and Lolo, and at the end of a year most of them, and especially the Lolo, already were reading correctly and were beginning to write little phrases in French. From this experiment one might at last conclude that these peoples are capable of a certain intellectual culture.

262 /141/ The Meo's method of living is of the simplest. His usual
252 food is maize, he eats meat only on the occasion of festivities, but
415 then he is not forbidden to eat the flesh of the dog, as are the Man. Maiz is cooked by steaming. It is eaten at home with an abundance of vegetables, but for meals while traveling, or in the fields, small cakes are made of it. A porcelain spoon is the only instrument used in bringing food to the mouth.

276 Although the cultivation of the opium poppy is very widespread
[249] among the Meo, he uses very little of it himself. On the other hand, almost all smoke tobacco, either in a water pipe, or in a pipe similar to our own. The tobacco prepared by them looks like French tobacco, but is very much stronger. Neither men nor women chew betel. Far
301 from lacquering their teeth, they take a certain pride in having them
515 brilliantly white and go so far as to carry their tooth-brushes hanging from their necklaces.

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/393 cont./

A 411 [283] [824] [415] cord is usually wound with a strip of bast in the center, because the most wear and tear is there. The arrows (Fig. 325), often poisoned at the tip, are made of bamboo throughout (Ill. 35)[2] and feathered with the same material. They are kept and carried around in quivers (Ill. 30[2] and Fig. 326) of wood or likewise bamboo.

The accuracy of the crossbow marksmen is considerable. I saw a little squirrel fall at the first shot at a distance of 20 meters. The penetrating power of the crossbow of the Akha is also very great. Stags and does are regularly killed even without poisoned arrows, and the Akha are able to slay even tigers with their crossbow, but they prefer to avoid these large cats. /Figs. 321-326 appear here./

A [224]

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Chapter 20

Military Affairs and War

M ● 181 721 The Meau are a warlike people who, at the risk of their lives and property, resist any subjugation and courageously face the enemy in defiance of death. Savina (1) describes them:

1. II, p. 232.

"Mild and timid in peace, they are wild and cruel in war."

M 648 M 701 [702] [562] In fact, it was only their infinitely superior greater strength of numbers that enabled the Chinese to subjugate the Meau. Every Meau who is able to carry a weapon is subject to military service, as well as boys as soon as they are able to handle the men's crossbow. Children and women, on the other hand, are excluded from active military service, though history has recorded instances of outstanding personal contributions in war by Meau women. Savina (1) /see footnote 1 above/ also mentions them: "Many a woman has become famous in war..."

1 [see cat 116, p270 - ANALYST]
2 [" " - p249 - "]

39: Bernatzik--619 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 AO1 Thailand
AKha AO4
Miao AE5

/458 cont./

A M 161 Thus, in recapitulation, it can be said that the number of the Akha and Meau living today, as well as the actual demographic movement, lie completely in obscurity. The Akha, too, may represent a considerable contingent of population, but it can hardly be assumed that it is a matter of anywhere near as mighty a bulk of population as the Meau. From my own observations I can say that in the case of both tribes it is a matter of thoroughly healthy people. As a consequence A M [163] [165] of the average number of children, from eight to twelve among the Akha and seven among the Meau, a strong increase of the population is to be presumed, in spite of high infant mortality, wherever there are no limiting factors, such as sickness (see the chapter, "Medicine"), crop failure, warlike events, or special laws of the political rulers of the country, which, of course, decisively influence the natural increase. /Ills. 86-91 appear here on unnumbered pages./

/459/ Chapter 31

Talent, Knowledge, Character, Morality, and Manners

M ● 181 461 The Meau are a typical mountain people. They are by nature healthy, honest, sincere, not at all treacherous, and, a above all, industrious. This is necessary in order to master the hard daily work that is to be done year in and year out. One M [124] seldom sees adults sit around idly. Among the Meau, whenever I summoned my informants for linguistic studies, they provided themselves beforehand with the necessary material for at least making string or rope during our conversations. They then worked mechanically while I conversed with them. These M 181 157 conversations and my observations of their daily life gave me a good opportunity to discover that the burden of everyday life had not made them morose. On the contrary, they are cheerful, merry, and, at the same time, very conscientious.

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/459 cont./

181 In the literature the character of the Meau is judged very differently. They come out the worst in the Chinese sources, which is understandable if one considers the fact that in four thousand years of struggles the Meau have not yet been completely subjugated and assimilated. Thus, the oldest part of the Schu-djin, which supplements the Bamboo Annals, characterizes them as follows: "These Meau are really stupid, silly, conceited, and without respect! Insolent and stubborn, they do not walk the path of righteousness and they destroy virtue!..."

181 The authors of other nationalities, however, especially Europeans, come to totally different conclusions, and many authors stress above all, besides many other good qualities, the honesty of the Meau. Thus, Savina (1) emphasizes: "Theft is

1. II, p. 232.

extremely rare." Since not all of the peoples neighboring the Meau can boast of such honesty, the members of these peoples positively search for an explanation of this, to them, very inexplicable phenomenon, and /460/ Dhuraratsadorn (1) writes

1. Page 170.

that the Meau have, "as a result of a strange character trait, an aversion to petty thefts." If they "wished to steal, this had to be done on a large scale. Forming bands /Platten/ and companies, they pillaged and, if necessary, did not shrink from murder." Actually, however, the "pillaging expeditions" [921] assumed by the author were a matter of war actions in the eyes of the Meau and had nothing at all to do with crime!

181 Marabail (2) gives the following characterization: "The

2. Page 463.

Meau is likable, honest, industrious, warlike, and intelligent. [191] He learns foreign languages quickly." I, too, was often able

Miao AE5
AKha A04

M /460 cont./
181 to observe this talent for languages. The Meau usually speaks
[191] at least one and usually two or more foreign languages in addition to his mother tongue. To possess knowledge is regarded among the Meau as wise; a person without knowledge is stupid, as they say. It was often expressed: one who masters life,
M [46] knows how to do the work in the house and in the fields properly,
[555] is wise. The desire for the best performance is already shown by this attitude, and likewise by the competitive games of the children (see the chapter, "Life in the Community," the section, "Children at Play and Work").

M 181 Almost all the authors mention the indomitable desire
648 for freedom of the Meau, which is already apparent from their historical traditions and the organization of their army, as well as their aversion to being ruled by members of other peoples. Abadie (3) asserts: "It is necessary to mention the repugnance

3. Page 163.

with which the Meau suffer their subordination under a Thai chief. Even if this is limited merely to trifling matters which only rarely affect the life of the Meau..." Savina (4) also

4. II, p. 232.

emphasizes this desire for independence, and Lajonquière (5)

5. II, p. 302.

gives a brief outline characterization: "The 'Meau' is regarded as an intelligent and skillful worker. The characteristic trait of his moral attitude is his deep love of freedom. At the slightest punishment or limitation, he sets out with all his belongings to seek a corner where he will find freedom. He is courageous and daring, keeps his word, and is open in his speech."

A Moreover, I found the Meau physically strong, hardened,
M and capable of great resistance against hunger, thirst, and all
147 physical exertion. The women, however, sometimes appear

AKha A04
Miao AE5

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M /460 cont./
147 somewhat soft /461/ and plaintive, especially in comparison
M with the A-kha women, who are superior to them in hardiness, as
147 these people generally are in relation to the Meau. I found
482 among the Meau of both sexes particularly good and reliable
[609] porters, though, in general, they perform porter-service for strangers very unwillingly. After they had once declared themselves ready to come to terms, however, the men as well as the women, without another word, took on loads up to 50 kilograms, walked along with these on their backs so rapidly that we could hardly keep up with them, and steadfastly kept their promise.

M The opposite of this pronounced mountain-folk character
147 of the Meau is formed by their valley-dwelling neighbors, the
● 181 Lao and the Schan /Shan/, who represent typical tropical peo-
171 ple of the valley lowlands. They are accustomed to having Nature pour everything from her horn of plenty into their laps without any effort, they love idleness, and they are lazy and indolent, for a single annual harvest abundantly feeds the family. They, too, are cheerful, but unreliable and flighty. The Lao were indeed easy to persuade to serve as porters, but they would complain even if the loads weighed only 18 kilograms and usually ran away after one day!

M The Meau treat women and children, as well as the
576 subordinates and unfree (see the chapter, "Social Organization," the section, "Age Classes, Secret Societies, Rank Organization") well throughout and are courteous to superiors without being
M humble. Abadie (1) also points out: "The Meau women are
157

1. Page 151.

cheerful, gay, and not very shy, especially when they have acquired confidence."

M Among one another the Meau are very friendly and
571 have a pronounced property sense. Whereas with regard to foreign
[648] people any violation of their property rights immediately arouses
[152] their warlike instincts, among the unmarried lads even the female sex cannot provoke any deep enmities; for these reasons duels
M are unknown. Such behavior is quite plausible in view of their
577

/461 cont./

577 aforementioned honesty which condemns lying to such an extent that it is not resorted to even if, in giving testimony, a father could thereby save his son, as I have already discussed in detail in the chapter, "Law and /462/ the Administration of Justice." 181 153 Considering their urge for freedom, the Meau can otherwise be designated as thoroughly disciplined.

648 Moreover, they have both presence of mind and the ability to make decisions, and are also very enterprising. While I was staying in northern Thailand in 1937, a group of about 100 Meau including men, women, and children quite unexpectedly [166] appeared in the Thailand city of Lampang. They indicated that they wanted to seek out new residence sites farther to the south. They were allowed to camp at the railway station, and after a week railway coaches were put at their disposal, and they were actually transported to the southwest where they were allotted new dwelling space in the mountains there. If one considers what it means for the Meau to descend into the hated valleys and, in addition, to venture into the city of a Thai people, one will be convinced that such enterprise and determination are not readily found among any of the other mountain peoples of Farther India.

181 153 The Meau face the tasks of life quite methodically, and accordingly Savina (1) characterizes them: "Accustomed to

1. II, p. 185.

disentangling everything alone, a Meau never falls into difficulties." Marabail (2) comes to the following conclusion: "Whereas

2. Page 463.

the Man (Yau) is full of imagination and religion, the Meau is a materialist..."

/462 cont./

181 [153] Their reaction to new impressions is remarkably quick, according to my observations, and stands in marked contrast to that of primitive peoples, as well as to that of the neighboring high-culture peoples, such as the Schan /Shan/ or Lao. In any case, it is established that in the case of the Meau there is no question at all of "primitives." Von Eickstedt (3), too, confirms

3. II, p. 57.

this: "These are no 'primitives.' On the contrary, they are a [177] dislodged tribe with a unique culture definitely from China, but not typically Chinese, driven out by the true Chinese and most strongly influenced by them. These people have their own language and their own tradition."

152 148 It was interesting to observe the behavior of the Meau who accompanied us into the cities of northern Thailand. Toward the Lao and Thai, they were by no means servile, but only modest, and yet proud /463/ and reserved. Impressed, Savina (1)

1. II, p. 184.

describes this pride of the Meau, which, interwoven with an episode, he depicts: "Once when we were traveling with some Meau and rested for a moment in a village of the Thai, whose inhabitants had a dispute with the Meau, great thirst tormented us. The Meau, however, preferred to walk another four kilometers rather than ask the Thai for a glass of water." How very 152 much the Meau, as true mountain people, suffer from homesickness when circumstances force them to leave their mountains was obvious even during the few days that they spent with me in the valleys. It is again Savina (2) who has also recorded this trait.

2. II, p. 177.

He tells of several Meau in a prison who would not eat and grew visibly emaciated. When asked the reason, they all answered: "We are thinking too much of our homes." A few days later, they were released and regained new strength immediately.

39: Bernatzik--674 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 A01 Thailand A01
Miao AE5

T 177 563

/497 cont./

At any rate, a Europeanization, that is to say, the assimilation of the culture of the mountain peoples to the European full-culture, carries great dangers with it. A forced cultural change progressing too rapidly in time /498/ destroys the natural development, destroys the unique culture of peoples, and causes severe psychic shocks. Moreover, it is doubtful whether the peoples who later perhaps become assimilated will always be docile pupils of the colonizers, if they do not merge into their nationality, and whether, on the contrary, serious political complications will not arise in the future. I have already referred to these problems in detail in my Völkerkunde, Vol. I, "Aufgaben der Kolonialethnologie/ Problems of Colonial Ethnology/." For a critical examination of the question as to whether the mountain peoples could fit into an organized state in our sense, a brief characterization is essential, in which I shall apply a yardstick corresponding to the European peoples.

T 177 563 M 177 [181]

The special abilities of the Meau are described in detail in the chapter, "Talent, Knowledge...," etc. It should nevertheless be recalled here that these people are distinguished by an especially clear mind and a discriminating intellect. The Meau think logically and act deliberately, possess a quick talent for comprehension and critical judgment. Persistence and industriousness at mental and physical work are remarkable. Of particular importance for the colonizer is their willingness to accept innovations once they have recognized them, and their striving for all kinds of improvements. Their manual skill and the indefatigable energy with which hardships and deprivations are endured are also to be stressed here. Their ability to make decisions is probably in every respect foremost among all the mountain peoples.

M [181]

Their urge for independence, their fearlessness bordering on defiance of death, their glowing love of freedom, which has been strengthened through thousands of years of fighting against powerful oppressors and has given them the reputation of feared warriors, will perhaps make difficulties for the colonizer.

It must also be pointed out that the culture of these people has undergone a shrinking process. The relatively low material culture and the return to hoe culture with the burning of clearings